THE

COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL.

VOL. III. BOSTON, MAY 15, 1841. No. 10.

LETTERS FROM A TEACHER TO HER YOUNG FEMALE FRIEND, JUST ABOUT COMMENCING TO KEEP SCHOOL.

No. VI.

My dear L——: You are now ready to speak of Longitude. This means the distance of a place east or west from any particular spot, as London or Washington; and it must be reckoned on the equator. The equator must be carefully divided into 24 parts of 15 degrees each, which will make 360 in the whole, letting the numbers run each way as high as 180. Begin at London, or at Washington, because these are the two places from which longitude is reckoned on our globes and maps. You may easily show that no place can be more than 180 degrees east or west of any particular meridian, because, if a place were more than 180 degrees east from the meridian, it would then be in west longitude; if more than 180 degrees west, it would then be in east longitude. Through the divisional points, that is, at every 15th degree, draw meridians to the north and south pole. The word *meridian* comes from a Latin word, which means *midday*, or *noon*. As the earth turns on its axis, all the places where the sun shines, and which have the same meridian, can see him at the same time. It will be 12 o'clock at noon, therefore, at the same time in all those places. To illustrate this, stick a row of pins upon one of your meridians, and turning it towards any particular scholar, ask him if they are not all opposite his face at the same time. He will see that it is so, and that if he were the sun, he would shine upon them all at once. Thus all the places on our meridian are exactly north or south of us, and the clocks in all such places are exactly like ours; that is, it is 12 o'clock at noon, at the same moment, in them all. If our clock is out of order, we must not set it by the watch of a person who has just arrived from a place either east or west, but we may do so by that of a person who comes from the north or south; that is, from a place through which the same meridian runs. Now say that you have drawn meridians all around the globe, with intervals of 15 degrees, because every 15 degrees answers to one hour of time, and by this means they can calculate the time at other places. For instance, at a place on the next meridian, or 15 degrees east, the sun will rise an hour earlier; at a place on the next meridian, west, it will rise an hour later; for the earth, in its revolution on its axis, will bring all places east of us into the sunlight earlier than those west of us, as the earth turns from the west to the east. It will consequently be 12 o'clock an hour sooner at all places

15 degrees east of us, &c. As every 15 degrees is equal to one hour of time, every degree is equal to four minutes of time, (60 divided by 15 being equal to 4.)

Perhaps you will here find it necessary to inform your pupils how many minutes there are in an hour, and how many seconds in a minute, for there must be a first time when children learn this.

When it is 12 o'clock, (noon,) at London, then, at all places just 60 degrees east of London, it will be 4 o'clock in the afternoon; at all places 60 degrees west, it will be 8 o'clock in the morning. In this way the hour may be determined at any place, if we know its longitude. If the place is east of the meridian from which we count, we must add to the time; if west, we must subtract from it.

Madras is 80 degrees east of London. When it is 12 o'clock, (noon,) in London, then it is 20 minutes past 5 in the afternoon at Madras.

Before you remove the pins from the meridian on which you placed them, call the attention of your scholars to the fact that those which are nearest to the equator move much faster than the others. A pin placed very near the pole, is as long in going round, as a pin placed at the equator. If a man should stand still at the spot where the pole is supposed to be, he would be just 24 hours in merely turning round, without going forward an inch, whilst a man at the equator would be carried nearly 25,000 miles in 24 hours, that being the time of the earth's revolution on its axis.

If you wish to find the longitude of any place, bring it to the meridian, and the degree on the equator shows the distance from London or Washington, whichever place you may have chosen for your *first meridian*

If you wish to find the difference of longitude between any two places, bring one place to the pasteboard meridian, and observe its longitude; then bring the other place to the same, and the number of degrees between the two is the difference. If you wish to find this distance in miles, multiply these degrees by 60, this being the number of geographical miles in each degree. The statute miles vary in different countries; those of England,—which measurement is also ours,—are 69½ miles to a degree; but for the common convenience of all nations, the geographical degree of 60 miles is used, as this is a measure common to all and understood by all. This will, however, give you only the difference of longitude between two places. You cannot by this method ascertain the actual distance, unless both places are situated at the equator, for the number of miles in a degree grows less as we go from the equator to the poles. By laying the graduated edge of the quadrant of altitude over the two places, so that the division marked 0 may be on one of the places, the degrees on the quadrant comprehended between them will give their distance; and if these degrees be multiplied by 60, the product will give the distance in geographical miles. If the distance between the two places should exceed the length of the quadrant, stretch a piece of thread from the one to the other; then apply the extent of the thread between these two to the equator, one end being placed upon the first meridian, and count the number of degrees.

Simple as this problem appears, however, yet, when applied to practice, the difficulties are almost insurmountable. In sailing across the

trackless ocean, or travelling through extensive or unknown regions, the only true guide is the compass. Tables are arranged for the purpose, and are to be found in some geographies, which give the exact miles and parts of a mile for every degree of latitude; and, by these, the actual distances between places can alone be accurately reckoned.

The usual method of finding how many miles make a degree of longitude in any given latitude, is to lay the quadrant of altitude parallel to the equator, between any two meridians in the given latitude, which differ in longitude 15 degrees; the number of degrees intercepted between them, multiplied by 4, will give the length of a degree in geographical miles. This rule is founded on a supposition that the number of degrees contained between any two meridians reckoned on the equator, is to the number of degrees contained between the same meridians, on any parallel of latitude, as the number of geographical miles contained in one degree on the equator is to the number of geographical miles contained in one degree on the given parallel of latitude. Thus, in the latitude of London, two places which differ 15 degrees in longitude, (if reckoned on the equator,) are $9\frac{1}{4}$ degrees distant. Hence, $15^\circ : 9\frac{1}{4}^\circ :: 60' : 37'$, or $15^\circ : 60' :: 9\frac{1}{4}^\circ : 37'$; but 15 are to 60 as 1 to 4; therefore, $1 : 4 :: 9\frac{1}{4} : 37$ geographical miles contained in one degree. Substitute any other number of degrees for $9\frac{1}{4}$, the fourth term will give the number of miles. This is sufficiently accurate for common purposes, but recourse must be had to calculation when greater exactness is required.

I have anticipated a little in not describing to you the *quadrant of altitude*, and its uses. This and several other appurtenances,—an horizon marked with the signs of the zodiac, an index and hour-hand, and perhaps an Analemma,—will complete your globe. But I now advise you to mark the names of a great many towns and islands, that you may exercise your pupils in finding the latitude and longitude of places, and the difference of time between places of different longitudes. If such exercises occupy them many days, the time will be well spent, for they will acquire a familiarity with the situations of places, with the equator and the meridian, which will facilitate future operations. Let them tell you all the towns in certain latitudes and certain longitudes. Mention the latitudes and longitudes of places, and require them to tell you the names of such places. And let them tell you the difference of latitude and of longitude, both in degrees and miles.

If you can obtain a thin, circular slip of wood, which will exactly fit your globe, you can easily make an horizon, as it is called, which you can occasionally fasten upon it. A slip of very stiff pasteboard, or millboard, will, however, answer the purpose. Let it be an inch and a half wide, and divide it first into 360 degrees, then into 12 parts, answering to the months of the year. In these divisions, sketch those constellations which compose the signs of the zodiac; or, if you cannot do this for want of a model, place the arbitrary sign of each in the respective divisions, with the name of the month in which the sun enters them. Your scholars have already made themselves familiar with these signs, beginning with Aries. You must now tell them that since the original arrangement of these signs, which was made about two thousand years ago, there has been a retrograde motion of the stars

from west to east, in a contrary direction to the sun's apparent course, so that the *vernal equinox*, which was the time when the sun entered Aries, now takes place when he enters Pisces, (20th March.) The *autumnal equinox*, which formerly took place when the sun entered Libra, occurs now when he is in Virgo, (23d of September.) The *summer solstice*, the period at which the sun reaches his highest latitude on the globe, north of the equator, is now in Gemini, instead of Cancer, (21st June,) and the *winter solstice* is now in Sagittarius, instead of Capricornus, (22d December.) For the better understanding of this, I will subjoin the ancient and modern arrangement.

Ancient.	*Modern.*	
♈ Aries.	Pisces, . . . March and April, ...	
♉ Taurus.	Aries, . . . April and May, ...	Spring.
♊ Gemini.	Taurus, . . May and June, ...	
♋ Cancer.	Gemini, . . June and July, ...	
♌ Leo.	Cancer, . . . July and August, ...	Summer.
♍ Virgo.	Leo, ... August and September, .	
♎ Libra.	Virgo, . . . September and October, .	
♏ Scorpio.	Libra, . . . October and November, .	Autumn.
♐ Sagittarius.	Scorpio, . . November and December,	
♑ Capricornus.	Sagittarius, . December and January, .	
♒ Aquarius.	Capricornus, January and February, .	Winter.
♓ Pisces.	Aquarius, . . February and March, . .	

Ages before the zodiac was fixed according to what I here call the ancient arrangement, made by a Greek astronomer, the Chaldeans and Egyptians had their first sign, or *vernal equinox*, in Taurus, and their *autumnal* one in Scorpio.

To make a *quadrant of altitude*, cut a slip of stiff paper, 18½ degrees longer than a quadrant of your globe. Divide the portion that extends from the horizon to the pasteboard meridian upwards from 0 to 90 degrees, and downwards from 0 to 18½. It is generally screwed to the brass meridian, but you must move it with your fingers when you wish to use it. The upper divisions are used to determine the distances of places, as mentioned above, and the lower divisions are applied to finding the beginning, end, and duration of twilight; for, owing to the refraction of the earth's atmosphere, the sun's light appears above the horizon when the body of the sun is 18½ degrees below it. No other use is made of it upon the terrestrial globe; but on the celestial the upper divisions are used to find the distances of the celestial bodies, their altitudes, &c. You can now find the zenith and sun's place at any spot on the globe for a particular day. Let it be London, and the 10th of May. Place your horizon in such a manner that the north pole will be 51½ degrees above it. This is the latitude of London. Count 51½ degrees from the equator toward the pole, and that will be the zenith of London. Fasten the quadrant of altitude on that spot, that it may be plain to the eye. By referring to the zodiacal signs on your horizon, you will find that the 10th day of May answers to the 20th degree of Taurus. Find this degree on the ecliptic, where you have previously marked the signs, and bring the 20th of Taurus to the meridian. That is the highest point the sun reaches in the latitude of London on that day, and is called "the sun's place at

12 o'clock." If you have an index and hour-hand, you can ascertain at what hour the sun rises and sets on that day, by setting the index to 12, and turning the sun's place (the 20th of Taurus) to the eastern edge of the horizon. The index will now point to the hour of rising. Turn it down to the western edge, and it will point to the hour of setting. The sun's place also marks on the horizon the point of compass for its rising and setting on that day.

On the 21st of March, the sun rises due east, and sets due west; between this and the 21st of September, it rises and sets to the northward of these points; and in the winter months, to the southward of them.

If you wish to know the length of the day and night at any time in the year, double the time of the sun's rising, which gives the length of the night; double the time of his setting, which gives the length of the day.

I believe it is not possible to use the *index* and *hour-circle* of a globe, unless the globe is properly mounted, so that it may be turned at pleasure. If you can find any ingenious person in your village who can make a suitable fixture for it, there are several problems which may be executed upon it to the advantage of your pupils. For instance, if you wish to find all the places at which an eclipse of the moon is visible, at the same time, find the place at which the sun is vertical, (it will be within the tropics, of course,) bring that place to the zenith, and set the index to the upper twelve; then turn the globe until the index points to the lower twelve, and the eclipse is visible to every part of the earth now above the horizon.

If you wish to find the declination of the sun at any particular place, on any particular day, look for the given day in the circle of months on the horizon, against which, in the circle of signs, are the sign and degree in which the sun is for that day. Find the same sign and degree in the ecliptic, drawn on the globe; bring it to the meridian, and its distance, reckoned on the meridian from the equator towards the poles, is the sun's declination. On the celestial globe, the distance would be reckoned on the equinoctial, the great circle of the heavens opposite the equator.

The sun's declination may also be found by the Analemma, which is a narrow slip of paper, whose length is equal to the breadth of the torrid zone. It may be pasted on some vacant place on the globe, in the torrid zone, one end touching the tropic of Cancer, the other the tropic of Capricorn. Divide it into months, and days of the month, corresponding to the sun's declination for every day in the year. Divide it into two parts. Let the right-hand part begin at the winter solstice, or December 21st, and be reckoned upwards towards the summer solstice, or June 21st, where the left-hand part begins, and reckon downwards on that side towards the winter solstice. On some globes the Analemma resembles the figure 8. It appears to have been drawn in this shape for the convenience of showing the equation of time, by means of a straight line passing through the midst of it. The *equation of time* is the difference of time shown by a well-regulated clock, and a correct sun-dial. This difference depends upon two causes,—the obliquity of the ecliptic, and the unequal motion of the earth in its orbit. This motion is faster when the earth is nearer the

sun, and slower when it is further from the sun,—her orbit being elliptical. A table has been made to show how much the sun is faster or slower than the clock ought to be, so far as the variation depends on the obliquity of the ecliptic.

Let me now suggest, that if you can induce your pupils each to bring a wooden ball, of convenient size, and each to make a globe for himself, as you have made yours, it will be a capital exercise of their perseverance and patience, and also of their skill.

In my next, I shall say something of the atmosphere of the earth, and then we will descend to its surface, and take note of that. M.

EXTERNALS *vs.* INTERNALS.

It is wrong to reprehend, as we often do, those men who are proud of their wealth, their rank, or their parentage. Standing at their point of view, their judgments are right and sound. They compare wealth with wealth, and theirs is greater; rank with rank, and theirs is higher; parentage with parentage, and theirs is more illustrious. Their misfortune and error consist in having so mean a standard. If they were able to conceive that intelligence is better than money, they would be ashamed of a pride founded on money; if they were able to conceive how much nobler high character is than high rank, they would strive almost to conceal the latter, lest it should detract from their admiration of the former; if they only knew how infinitely superior good deeds are to what is called good parentage, they would wholly forget the latter in their reverence for the former. If they could look beyond accidents and circumstances,—if they had souls, all their notions would be reversed. But from their point of view, their judgments are quite sound; and if they have not soul enough to elevate themselves above that point, we ought not to stifle one thrill of their pleasure; for if deprived of these sources, no enjoyments would be left to them. They are like the poor toad who thinks his wide mouth and yellow underdress are beautiful, because no ideality ever supplied him with the conception of any thing more beautiful. When we see a young man, therefore, proud of what his barber, his tailor, and his groom have done for himself and his horse, we would not disturb his self-complacency; for how miserable and empty must his life be, if he had no pleasures but those which come from knowledge, worth, energy, and talent! When we see a young lady in the streets, who sways, right and left, obedient to the waving plumes upon her bonnet, we are reminded that, by the law of gravitation, the lighter substance should move in obedience to the weightier. It is instructive to see the contrast between the motions, when the lady commands the dress, and when the dress commands the lady. A dignified, matronly woman always moves equably and unpretendingly, self-balanced by the specific gravity of worth and talent,—as a deeply-freighted ship sails steadily, while an empty one bobs and waddles with every whiff of wind.

Epicures expend all their ingenuity in getting good food for their appetites, rather than in getting a good appetite for their food.

[For the Common School Journal.]

SUMMER SCHOOLS.

TO FEMALES PURPOSING TO BECOME TEACHERS.

No. III.

Whether you adopt the mild discipline or the severe, you must expect trying cases, which you will hardly know what to do with. Do not think that by changing your ground, you will certainly get rid of all trouble. If, for instance, there are difficulties on the forbearance principle, there are, it may be, greater difficulties on the compulsion principle.

Again; you will find your account in having your schoolroom set in order, and your business prepared before school hours;—books ruled, pens mended, &c. &c. Every *devoted* teacher does much in this way. Half an hour thus spent, will be to you and to the school, in its effects, more than an hour's gain.

Once more; as early as possible make yourself acquainted with the character of every one of your pupils. Satisfy yourself both in regard to what he can and cannot do, and what he is disposed to do and disposed not to do.

Again; keep a general supervision over your schoolroom; know what is going on in every part of it, and at *all* times; who is idle, and who is studious. There is, I notice, a great difference among teachers in this respect. Some seem to have a kind of omniscience in the schoolroom. They see all things. Some see only the great faults, and what is immediately around them, while from the notice of others nothing seems to escape. Difference of success in the labors of the schoolroom, is, perhaps, owing to nothing more than to this cause.

Convince your pupils early, by actions, not by words, that you are their friend, and deeply interested in their welfare. Encourage the desponding, assist the inquiring, praise the deserving, and sympathize with all in their trials.

Every thing which you can do to make the schoolroom a pleasant, interesting place, will be so much added to your power over your pupils, and to the effective character of your school;—a picture hanging upon the walls, a piece of statuary, a new article of apparatus, a flower, a mineral, an interesting anecdote or story,—all these will be so many means of attraction,—moral or mental levers, by which you will move the mass of mind, on which you are operating. Store your own mind, then, with interesting and instructive anecdotes, with biographical and historical sketches, and these judiciously intersperse in your instruction. They will impart life and exhilaration to the schoolroom scenes; you can hardly do your school a greater service.

Again; I never found much advantage in sending complaints to parents about their children. Settle your own difficulties. I believe it is best to do all we can for a child; and, if possible, to get along without troubling parents. From a candid, judicious parent you may receive aid; but generally it will only add to your embarrassment to call upon them on every petty occasion.

Enjoin upon your pupils, neatness, order, and gentle, quiet movements, in their coming in and going out, in taking and leaving their seats, in the arrangements of their desks, and the disposal of their hats,

bonnets, coats, &c. &c. Many may regard these matters as too trifling to deserve the supervision of the teacher. But they have an important influence in the formation of *character*, as well as upon the immediate comfort and effective operations of the schoolroom; and my advice is, "Have a place for every thing, and every thing in its place; a time for every thing, and every thing at its time." Let your schoolroom have order and stillness; but let it be the order and stillness of life, and activity, and business, not the quietude of indolence or death. Let the recitations, and all your schoolroom operations, be brisk; and to enliven them, often change or vary their mode. Have not the same way, continually and forever, for doing the same thing. Relate a story; tell an anecdote; turn the recitation into a conversation, discussion, or debate. Tell the class something that is not in the book; ask the scholars to tell what they have seen; once in a while, recite the lesson yourselves. I am in earnest,—recite the lesson yourselves. It will do your pupils good, and you too. Many a teacher would get her eyes open, and be profited by attempting to recite the lesson while the scholars listen. Teach your pupils to *think* rather than *talk*, and ideas rather than words. Do not allow them, much less require them, to recite in the words of the author. If a pupil fails in one part of the lesson, give him a chance in another; and even see whether he can say any of it, and do not set him down for a blunderhead or an idler, because he cannot understand all. This, perhaps, you would not be able to do yourself. Who can recollect or understand every thing? Be not so ambitious to go over much ground, and teach many things, as to teach a few things well, thoroughly, surely. Aim to make *good* readers, smooth, distinct, intelligent, natural. Put the question often, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" If a scholar cannot call a word, have some other way to help him along than telling him to "spell it." And allow not, I pray you, the noisy, drawling, unnatural manner, into which beginners so often fall in school. And have some uniformity of time and pitch; and allow not, as I have often witnessed, scholars in the same class, and while reading the same piece, to go at every manner of rate, and speak at every degree of pitch; some at the speed of a race-horse, calling half the words wrong; others with the pace of a loaded ox-team;—some with their voices strained up to C *in alt.*, and others growling along in a tone resembling thorough-bass. In all branches, ask other questions than those in the book, and in a different order; and maintain the practice of conversing with your pupils, and delivering familiar lectures on all the subjects which you teach. Teach much by external objects, visible illustrations, and the black-board; and to this end, be able yourselves to sketch and draft readily. This gives a teacher a wonderful advantage. Show your scholars only what they cannot find out themselves; never do their work for them; and when you show them, never do it directly, but lead them into the right way by indirect questioning. See that all your scholars are supplied with books and apparatus; require all to keep the places of the lessons for themselves, and they will seldom need to ask leave to speak. If there are any inquiries to be made about lessons, or places, or difficulties, let it be done before the school, or at the commencement of it, or at recess. Hold short sessions, give short lessons, and have frequent but short recesses. During study hours, let all intercommunication, and

all unnecessary noise, of every kind, cease entirely. Neglect no part of education,—physical, intellectual, or moral, especially the last. In regard to difficulties and quarrels among your pupils, I think they will seldom occur, or will be easily settled, if you inculcate and practise the right spirit, in your school. In schools that are regulated on the principle of premiums, emulation, scolding and whipping, I believe there will be likely to be much out-door quarrelling among the boys. But when a different, a milder spirit is inculcated and practised within doors, a different spirit and practice will be manifested without. And in regard to these *means* of governing and disciplining, I would advise you, (and it is advice based upon much reflection and experience,) to keep clear of them all. There is no doubt of their immediate and powerful efficacy in preserving a sort of forced order, and getting good lessons; but their *moral* influence is bad, decidedly bad; and you may have a good school without them. I know that schools have been taught and governed *well*, without the rod, or ferule, or premiums; and what has been may be again. Gird up your own spirits for the work. Be patient, be mild, be firm, be uniform; endeavor to make your school interesting; let it appear to your scholars, that you are heartily devoted to their improvement, and are competent to teach them, and you will not need to call in the rod to your aid. Yes, make your schools attractive; make your scholars feel that it is a privilege to come to school. Teachers have greatly degraded their office, by consenting to turn flagellators for the parish. It is a degrading, hateful office. As you would respect the character of teacher, have nothing to do with it. Do all you can do, all that may be done without it, and you will find but little that will remain undone. Carry your authority in your countenance, in your tone, manner. But you will ask, what shall be done when boys rebel absolutely, and matters come to the worst? I say, where things are done in the right way, such a crisis rarely occurs, very rarely. You may keep school your lifetime, and not have one such case. When it does come, some would say, "put the rod on." I would say rather,—dismiss the refractory boy, with a kind, solemn admonition, that, when he will return to duty, he may return to school. But, say some, there is great objection to turning boys into the street. So there is; but there is greater, in my opinion, either to retaining them in school to the injury of others, or to keeping them in subjection by the terror of the rod. The rod poisons the very atmosphere of the schoolroom, and creates more moral evil than can accrue from turning out a single pupil. This pupil is not cut off from education. School is but *one* means, among many, of education. Besides, if you dismiss him in such a manner as above stated, there is great probability, that he will come to himself, and return, and beg to be admitted and restored to his place and privileges. Then, indeed, you have gained him over to reason and duty. Teachers create difficulties themselves, and then ask what they shall do with them without the rod. They do not know the depths of the human heart. They do not know the extent of their own resources. I say again, let them do all they can, all that may be done without the rod, and they will find that little more remains to be done.

P. C.

[Remarks. Our most worthy and esteemed correspondent does not leave us to grope in doubt as to his views respecting corporal punish-

ment. There is no non-committalism here. He is profoundly anti-Solomon. Graham cannot have a greater horror of tasting flesh, than he has of tingling it. But with all our admiration of the spirit with which he deprecates force and pleads for the omnipotence of love; and with all our admiration of the talent for government, which has enabled him, in his own schools, to forego the use of the rod with impunity; yet we cannot but believe that in prohibiting a resort to it, under all circumstances, and with regard to all teachers and all schools, he is demanding more than many teachers have, as yet, the ability to perform; and, should he succeed in proscribing it altogether, he would cause the substitution of other modes of punishment, equally objectionable in principle, and far more injurious to the character of the recipients. We are willing to concede to our friend, that the use of the rod, in school, is twice cursed,—cursing him that gives and him that takes,—nay, three times cursed, if he pleases, for it often leads the inflictor and the sufferer to curse each other; but still we contend that it is not the greatest curse for either party,—giver or receiver; that were it abolished, greater curses would come in to supply its place; and that, instead of the one devil of the rod, which is cast out, we should have the seven devils of anarchy, hastening in to take its place; so that the last state of the school would be worse than the first. We do not believe that the principle of cautiousness was implanted in the human mind, to be the sole impulse of its actions; nor that the nerves have been so infinitely ramified on the external surface of the body, and protected by so thin a covering, in order to invite an occasional flaying; but we do believe, when all higher motives fail, that it is lawful to appeal to the universal sentiment of cautiousness or fear; and also that, when there is a perfect blindness and recklessness in the mind of a child, in regard to all future consequences of conduct, it is allowable to reach his will through the living sensibilities of what the physiologists call the *cutis vera*, or true skin. Nor are we able to discover any principle or precept, that would prohibit the use of punishment, in school, which, if carried out to its legitimate consequences, would not also prohibit it, in society. Indeed, this is the abyss of folly into which the thorough and consistent non-resistants blindly plunge,—some of whom are said to carry their doctrines so far as not to resist their own appetites and propensities.

When, from bad management at home, or bad examples in the streets, vicious habits and propensities have unfortunately taken full possession of the nature of a child, and all the kindness, love, sympathy, persuasion, of which the teacher is capable, do not expel the adversaries from his bosom, there seems to be not only the highest reason, but the highest authority also, for taking a scourge of cords, (small or large, as the exigency of the case may require,) and driving out those habits and propensities from the temple of that child's soul, which they infest and desecrate.

If, as is suggested in this excellent communication, every scholar is to be turned out of school who cannot be managed by persuasion in it, we should have, on an average, at the very lowest calculation, more than one scholar expelled, for each of our summer, and each of our winter schools; that is, more than three thousand for each season, and therefore more than six thousand annually;—six thousand children,

released from all fear, from all immediate pain, from all salutary restraints, and turned out to be marauders and freebooters on society. Who can contemplate this result, and say that it is a less evil than that of corporal punishment in schools!

But let us not be misunderstood. We would not be supposed to countenance its infliction to the extent to which it is often carried. It is frequently the first resort of the teacher; it should always be the last. When President Wayland said to an assembly of teachers, "Let us make our mark on the rising generation," he did not mean a mark, in *basso relievo*, upon their backs, though by some, he seems to have been so understood. Punishment is always an evil. It is often a greater evil than that which it is designed to remove. It is only when it is a less evil than the one to be removed, that it can be justifiably inflicted. And hence it is that those who have never thought of its evil consequences, resort to it precipitately and unnecessarily, and inflict gratuitous wrong. Hence, too, those who undertake to keep school without preparation, or who neglect any opportunity to extend their qualifications for keeping school, and are then obliged, because of such neglect or deficiency, to have recourse to corporal punishment, when otherwise they might have avoided it, are wholly without excuse; and all the harm, however great, which springs from a necessity occasioned by their own previous fault or omission, is justly chargeable to their account.

Our correspondent must pardon us for this free expression of our dissent from one of his views. Our columns will always be open to him for the vindication of his own side of the question. Ed.]

True thoughts are given that they may be imbodied in action. Hence, when persons see what is right, and what ought to be done, without moving one step to do it, it is proof of great mental weakness and imbecility. There is a class of persons who seem to have no recognition of what is right and true; they spend a life in the midst of wrong, without noticing it, or regretting it; without one prayer or effort for a better condition of things;—these are *bad* persons. There is another class who love to contemplate ideal, imaginary suffering; they can sigh and weep over the fictitious distresses of a novel, and are rejoiced when poetic justice is executed upon the offenders; but they will not wet a foot or lift a hand to relieve positive pain, in the next street, or at the next door. They would be very glad to have an angel come down and quench the burning tortures of a poor widow, or shelter and feed her houseless, homeless, famishing children; but, as for foregoing any accustomed call or luxury,—as for staying away from a ball, a theatre, or a ride, for any such purpose, *it is inconvenient*;—these are *moral imbeciles*. But there are those whose sympathies for others' pains are quick as consciousness of their own; who feel a personal exemption from suffering when others are relieved, and to whose ear the song of the captive ransomed from guilt is sweeter than the chorus of the world, in praise of themselves;—these are *godlike*.

ATTACK ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION IN MASSACHUSETTS.

[From COMBE's Notes on the United States of North America, vol. ii. p. 277.]

The assault against this institution, which I have repeatedly alluded to, has at length been made in the Legislature of the State. On the 3d of March, 1840, the committee on education was directed by the House of Representatives to consider the expediency of abolishing the Board of Education and the Normal Schools; and on the 7th of March, the majority of the committee presented a report, which merits serious attention. The reader will find the constitution and powers of this Board described in vol. i. p. 52; and he is reminded that Mr. Dwight, a citizen of Boston, had made a gift of $10,000 to the State, on the condition that the Legislature should provide a similar sum, and apply both to the institution of Normal Schools, which was accordingly done. The report possesses more than a local and temporary interest. It is indicative of the state of intelligence of a considerable portion of the citizens of Massachusetts, whose opinions it expresses; and besides, it imbodies views which, in all probability, would be urged by one party or another against education under the sanction of government in other countries. I shall therefore briefly advert to it.

Two reports were presented, one by the majority, and another by the minority of the committee. The majority object to the Board for the following, among other reasons:—

"The Board has a tendency, and a strong tendency, to engross to itself the entire regulation of our Common Schools, and particularly to convert the Legislature into a mere instrument for carrying its plans into execution."

Remark.—The Board has *no power* except that of communicating information, and recommending measures to the school committees, teachers, and other persons interested in education. Therefore it can engross to itself the regulation of the schools, only by convincing the understanding of those who manage them of the wisdom of its proposals; and this is not a power of which any rational being can be justly jealous.

"If the Board has any actual power, it is a dangerous power, trenching directly upon the rights and duties of the Legislature; if it has no power, why continue its existence at an annual expense to the Commonwealth?"

Answer.—By the wisdom of its suggestions and the character of its members, it may exercise a *moral power* which may prove highly beneficial, while it does not, and cannot, trench on the rights and duties of the Legislature. Its members serve without salaries or fees, and the annual expense which it occasions does not exceed one tenth part of a cent. per annum to each of the inhabitants of the Commonwealth.

"As a mere organ for the collection and diffusion of information on the subject of education, the Board seems to your committee to be, in several respects, very much inferior to those voluntary associations of teachers which preceded the existence of the Board, and which, perhaps, suggested the idea of it." * * * "The school committees of the several towns and districts are qualified to superintend the schools, and might best be trusted with that superintendence."

The slightest knowledge of the actual condition of the schools, schoolhouses, teachers, modes of teaching, and things taught in the Commonwealth, will suffice to convince any reasonable person that this is a most lame and untenable assertion. Before it was made, the Secretary to the Board of Education had publicly stated that, "In this Commonwealth, there are about 3000 public schools, in all of which the rudiments of knowledge are taught. These schools, at the present time, are so many distinct, independent communities; each being governed by its own habits, traditions, and local customs. There is no common superintending power over them; there is no bond of brotherhood or family between them. They are strangers and aliens to each other. The teachers are, as it were, imbedded each in his own school district; and they are yet to be excavated, and brought together, and to be established, each as a polished pillar of a holy temple. As the system is now administered, if any improvement in principles or modes of teaching is discovered by talent or accident in one school, instead of being published to the world, it dies with the discoverer. No means exist for multiplying new truths, or even for preserving old ones. A gentleman, filling one of the highest civil offices in this Commonwealth,—a resident in one of the oldest counties, and in one of the largest towns in the State,—a sincere friend of the cause of education,—recently put into my hands a printed report drawn up by a clergyman of much repute, which described, as was supposed, an important improvement in relation to our Common Schools, and earnestly enjoined its general adoption; when it happened to be within my own knowledge that the supposed new discovery had been in successful operation for sixteen years, in a town but little more than sixteen miles distant!" This representation is indisputably correct, and in the face of it to deny the utility of the Board of Education, must have required no small obliquity, either of understanding or of conscience.

There are countries which have outstripped Massachusetts in some branches of education, and in the art of teaching, and her teachers stand in need of nothing more than the active agency of an enlightened central board, to collect and diffuse information on these subjects,—to urge them to adopt improvements,—to give advice to local committees, and to submit to their consideration rules which would benefit the pupils. Such are the duties of the Board of Education; and its constitution is framed with express reference to the people themselves continuing to govern their schools. It can operate only by convincing the teachers and school committees that they may do something better than they have previously accomplished. It is not to be expected that voluntary associations of teachers, the members of which are scattered through the State, and engrossed with local objects, interests, and duties, should acquire, digest, and diffuse information with the same success as a public board; and besides, they would want that moral weight to induce the acceptance of improvements, which gives the Board its chief value.

"The establishment of the Board of Education seems to be the commencement of a system of centralization, and of monopoly of power in a few hands, contrary, in every respect, to the true spirit of our democratical institutions, and which, unless speedily checked, may lead to unlooked for and dangerous results."

The Board of Education can wield only the power of moral suasion; they cannot coerce, they cannot bribe, they cannot exercise even a veto on any measure or appointment. Their influence, then, must bear a proportion to the extent of the reason which they present to the understandings of those whom they address, of the practical advantages which they show as likely to result from their recommendations, and from no other source. The real proposition imbodied in the foregoing objection is, that democracy, for its own security, must resist the dictates of reason, and reject the most obvious measures of utility, when propounded by its own servants, lest, by accepting them, these servants should acquire a moral influence over the minds of the people! But this is tantamount to a denial of the rational nature of man. A virtuous and enlightened mind cannot avoid admiring superior wisdom, and yielding to the suggestions of superior intelligence; and if the Board of Education display those qualities, why should its influence be dreaded? If it do not, it can exercise no control over the public mind, unless we assume that both its members and the people are irrational, and will voluntarily adopt injurious errors.

So far from such a board being dangerous, it is what above all things is wanted in every State in the Union. There is a want of a *moral power* which shall address itself to the higher faculties of the people, and assist in forming and giving consistency and permanence to opinion, and which, without conflicting with the political, religious, or money powers, at present exclusively prevailing, may serve, through the influence of reason, to elevate, temper, and guide them all. Such a board, named by the Legislature in every State, and invested with a pretty extensive range of moral functions, seems, of all imaginable institutions, that which is most directly fitted to prove useful to a democracy which must rest on the intelligence and morality of the people, or perish. In its addresses to the people, it would confine itself to objects of moral import alone; but it would appeal to *principles*, expound consequences, recall the admonitions of experience, and, in short, supply, to some extent, the grand deficiencies which palpably exist in the public mind,—the want of knowledge, of reflection, and of regard to distant but inevitable results.

"The right to mould the political, moral, and religious opinions of his children is a right exclusively and jealously reserved by our laws to every parent; and for the government to attempt, directly or indirectly, as to these matters, to stand in the parent's place, is an undertaking of very questionable policy."

The Board of Education operates on the children only through the medium of the parents; for the parents themselves either constitute or elect the school committees and school inspectors, who, again, appoint, superintend, and dismiss the teachers. The Board, therefore, can neither order nor forbid any thing, except by convincing the electors, and those who obey them, of its utility.

The report next attacks "The School Library." "It is professed, indeed, that the matter selected for this library will be free both from sectarian and political objections. Unquestionably the Board will endeavor to render it so. Since, however, religion and politics in this free country are so intimately connected with every other subject, the accomplishment of that object is utterly impossible, nor would it be desirable, if possible."

This argument is founded on the assumption that there is no portion of religion which is not matter of contention between the sects, and no scientific principles in politics and political economy which are not subjects of party disputation. With all deference to the authors of this report, there is a vast field of Christian, ethical, and political truth, which is highly interesting and instructive to the young, and which, nevertheless, is happily without the pale of contest, and may appropriately form the groundwork of the treatises prepared for the Common-School Libraries.

"Another project, imitated from France and Prussia, and set on foot under the superintendence of the Board of Education, is the establishment of Normal Schools. Your committee approach this subject with some delicacy, inasmuch as one half the expense of the two Normal Schools already established has been sustained by private munificence." * * * "Academies and high schools cost the Commonwealth nothing, and they are fully adequate, in the opinion of your committee, to furnish a competent supply of teachers." * * * "*Considering that our district schools are kept, on an average, for only three or four months in the year, it is obviously impossible, and perhaps it is not desirable, that the business of keeping these schools should become a distinct and separate profession*, which the establishment of Normal Schools seems to anticipate." *

This is a striking acknowledgment of the low state of education in the Commonwealth; and if the committee had been composed of enlightened men, it would have perceived that this fact furnished the most forcible reason for establishing normal seminaries, and for increasing the length of the attendance at the Common Schools; but they, on the contrary, recommended the abolition of the Board of Education, the School Library, and the Normal Schools, and proposed to refund the money "generously contributed" to the support of the latter by Mr. Dwight! They appended to their report the draft of an act to carry these recommendations into effect!

In my humble opinion, all that has been written by European travellers against the people of the United States, their manners and institutions, will not depreciate the character of their civilization in the judgment of reflecting men to one half the extent that will be done by this document alone. It appears, indeed, to contradict much that I have already said in favor of the American people; and at the hazard of standing still further condemned, I am under the necessity of reporting that it found 182 individuals in the House of Representatives of Massachusetts, the most enlightened of the States, to vote for its adoption. In point of fact, however, I have endeavored to convey the idea that there is a vast extent of ignorance in the Union, and even in Massachusetts; and this report signally sustains the assertion. But there is also another side to the picture, which I am happy now to exhibit.

[* This statement of the committee, in regard to the length of the schools, is strikingly erroneous. Their average length was more than seven months, instead of "only three or four." We are bound, however, in common charity, to suppose that this error was committed in ignorance, notwithstanding the official document showing the actual average length of the schools was before the committee. As this report of the majority of the committee seems destined to acquire some notoriety, abroad as well as at home, it seems proper to give the names of those members by whom it was made. They were Allen W. Dodge, of Hamilton; Frederick Emerson, of Boston; Chester Tilden, of Belchertown; and B. D. Hyde, of Southbridge. Ed.]

The minority of the committee, consisting of "Mr. John A. Shaw and Mr. Thomas A. Greene," gave in an admirable report in support of the Board of Education and the Normal Schools; some of the Boston newspapers warmly espoused their cause. Dr. Channing published in one of these an eloquent and cogent defence of them, and in the House of Representatives, a highly interesting debate ensued on the merits of the whole question, the result of which was, that 248 members voted *for the rejection of the first mentioned report*, making a majority in favor of the Board of sixty-six members.*

* Since the text was written, I have received the "Abstract of the Massachusetts School Returns for 1839–40," and regard it as affording a triumphant vindication of the law, which established the Board of Education,—of the Board itself, and of its Secretary. These Returns have been made by 301 out of 307 towns in the Commonwealth; and they are accompanied by selections from the Reports of the School Committees. The "Returns," and "Reports," taken together, present a most instructive and interesting view of the condition of the schools at the present time. They appear to me to show that the condition of the schoolhouses is, in many instances, deplorably deficient; so much so as to be injurious to the health and symmetrical growth of the children; that the schools generally have been sadly neglected by the more wealthy and intelligent citizens; and that many of the teachers, although men of excellent moral character, are, in consequence of their own deficiencies in education and in the art of teaching, ill qualified for their situations. This is an alarming picture of a Commonwealth, whose prosperity rests on the morality and intelligence of its people. It indicates, that the first step towards a despotism,—that of rearing an ignorant population,—had been taken. But the "Abstract" shows a cheering counterpart. The exposure of these defects is already stimulating public opinion to enforce their removal. The Reports of the School Committees, while they indicate that a highly enlightened zeal in educational improvement exists in many of the towns, throw a flood of light, not only on what is deficient, but on the means of supplying what is wanting. The accurate knowledge, sound sense, and classical eloquence, of some of these reports do honor to the State, and by placing their bright coruscations of moral sentiment and intellect, side by side with reports of a different character, the most vigorous emulation will be excited, in all, to improve. The fact of all the towns having reported except six, shows that the machinery is efficient. The "queries" circulated by the Board, and which the committees, in most instances, have answered, are of the most searching description, and well calculated "to hold the mirror up to nature," and to show to every town its own imperfections or accomplishments.

The public mind must be vividly awakened to the importance of education, by such a document as this; and it is indispensable that it should be so. Under a despotism like that of Prussia, the whole intelligence and power of the State can be wielded by the sovereign, and applied to the improvements of schools; but in the United States, unless the people, *the whole people*, see the necessity of a high education, understand what constitutes it, and become animated with an active zeal to attain it, the Common Schools cannot prosper. As water cannot rise higher than its fountain, so, in the United States, education, morality, and religion cannot rise higher than the level of the intelligence of the people. The law in Massachusetts is wisely framed, with a view to this fact. The Secretary to the Board, by travelling round the State, by correspondence and interviews, obtains all the knowledge he can reach, respecting existing defects and practical improvements; he communicates this information to the Board; from them it goes to the Legislature, by whom it is printed, and sent into every school district of the State. The law requires that the committee of each town shall make a report to *the town*, a copy of which must be sent to the Board; and from these reports the Annual Abstract is composed. (See Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Education, together with the Fourth Annual Report of the Secretary of the Board. Boston, 1841.) Although in all this there is nothing of compulsion, and although the Board acts by moral influence alone, yet the system, by appealing to the Benevolence and Intellect, the Self-Esteem and Love of Approbation, the Philoprogenitiveness and Conscientiousness of the whole community, is calculated to produce great results. It will beget that deep and general interest in education, in the whole people, without which, as already remarked, schools cannot flourish in an American Commonwealth. I shall regard it as a bright day for Great Britain when she shall have such a machinery at work, directed by such able hands, to raise the moral and intellectual condition of her people.

[THE COMMON SCHOOL JOURNAL; published semi-monthly, by *Marsh, Capen, Lyon, and Webb*, No. 109 Washington Street, Boston. HORACE MANN, Editor. Price, One Dollar a year.]